

ACCRA COST OF LIVING INDEX

Prepared by ACCRA

PRESS RELEASE - For Immediate Release

Among the 305 urban areas participating in the fourth quarter 2004 *ACCRA Cost of Living Index*, the after-tax cost for a professional/managerial **standard of living ranged from more than twice the national average in New York (Manhattan) NY to more than 20 percent below the national average in McAlester OK.** The *ACCRA Cost of Living Index* is compiled and published quarterly by ACCRA, the association of community and economic development research professionals.

The Ten Most and Least Expensive Urban Areas in the ACCRA Cost of Living Index (COLI)

Fourth Quarter 2004

National Average for 305 Urban Areas = 100

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index	Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index
1	New York (Manhattan) NY	211.6	1	McAlester OK	79.1
2	San Francisco CA	183.6	2	Laredo TX	82.6
3	San Jose CA	168.9	3	McAllen TX	83.8
4	Honolulu HI	161.6	4	Clarksville TN	84.8
5	Los Angeles-Long Beach CA	156.4	5	Hot Springs AR	84.9
6	Oakland CA	155.0	6	Jonesboro AR	85.1
7	Orange County CA	154.6	7	Conway AR	85.3
8	Stamford CT	148.7	8	Pryor Creek OK	85.4
9	San Diego CA	147.7	9	Douglas GA	85.5
10	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria DC-VA	144.5	10	Fort Smith AR	85.5

The *ACCRA Cost of Living Index* measures regional differences in the cost of consumer goods and services, excluding taxes and non-consumer expenditures, for professional and managerial households in the top income quintile. It is based on more than 50,000 prices covering 60 different items for which prices are collected quarterly by chambers of commerce, economic development organizations or university applied economic centers in each participating urban area. Small differences should not be interpreted as showing a measurable difference.

The composite index is based on six components – housing, utilities, grocery items, transportation, health care and miscellaneous goods and services.

Where's the most expensive coffee?

Each quarter, ACCRA collects more than 50,000 prices from communities across the US and Canada for the COLI. This quarter, ACCRA features the communities with the most and least expensive coffee. Prices reflect the average reported prices 11.5 ounces can or brick of Folgers, Maxwell House or Hill Brothers coffee.

**The Five Most and Least Expensive Places to Buy Coffee
in the ACCRA Cost of Living Index (COLI)
Fourth Quarter 2004
Average for 305 Urban Areas = \$2.70**

Most Expensive			Least Expensive		
Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index	Ranking	Urban Areas	COL Index
1	Honolulu, HI	\$5.72	1	Camden SC	\$1.53
2	San Jose, CA	\$4.79	2	Hilton Head Island SC	\$1.73
3	Lake Havasu City, AZ	\$4.29	3	Tampa FL	\$1.75
4	San Francisco, CA	\$4.28	4	Charleston-N Charleston SC	\$1.79
5	Oakland, CA	\$4.26	5	Gastonia NC	\$1.81

A Closer Look at Honolulu, HI

Quarter 4, 2004 Price Report	GROCERY	HOUSING	TRANSPORTATION	HEALTH CARE	MISC. GOODS AND SERVICES
	Dozen Eggs	New Home Price	Gallon of Gasoline	Optometrist	Cheese Pizza
Honolulu Average Price	\$2.71	\$609,847	\$2.325	\$103.35	\$14.50
National Average Price	1.09	\$269,142	\$1.990	\$73.77	\$10.10

The quarterly ACCRA Cost of Living Index is available by subscription for \$140 per year (print or PDF version) or \$250 per year (electronic version). Send check, payable to ACCRA, P.O. Box 100127, Arlington VA 22210-0407, or subscribe on the Internet at www.costofliving.org

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